

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
USSN 09/994,891

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-6 are allowed and claims 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brar et al (EP 0 332 784 B1) in view of Ishida et al (EP 0 915 456 A1). By this Amendment, Applicants cancel claims 7 and 8.

Formal Matters

Applicants note that neither the Office Action dated March 31, 2003, nor the Office Action dated January 23, 2004, indicates whether or not the drawings filed on November 28, 2001, are accepted by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request such indication in the next Office communication.

In addition, Applicants note that page 2 of the present Office Action dated January 23, 2004, indicates that the prior art references submitted with Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) of September 30, 2003, have been considered by the Examiner. However, the Examiner inadvertently attached to the present Office Action the initialed Form PTO-1449 of Applicants' IDS filed on November 28, 2001, rather than the initialed "Substitute for Form 1449 A & B/PTO" of the IDS filed on September 30, 2003. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to return the initialed "Substitute for Form 1449 A & B/PTO" to the undersigned in the next Office communication.

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The Rejection of Claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

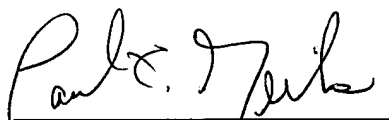
In view of Applicants' cancellation of claims 7 and 8, Applicants submit that the rejection of claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are moot.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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